Dear fellow National Nursing Association (NNA) of ICN,

**CANVASSING YOUR SUPPORT FOR MY CANDIDACY FOR ICN PRESIDENT.**

As you may be aware, I have been nominated to stand as ICN Presidential candidate by the Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa (DENOSA), which I have duly accepted.

With this letter, I plead for your support as an NNA of ICN in the upcoming Congress in June in Finland.

As a leader in nursing, I see it appropriate to sensitize the fellow leaders in nursing about the latest global developments, which have no connection to nursing but have a huge impact on nursing and nurses globally. And dare I say, these developments are mostly political, but their impact is devastating on nursing workforce, staff morale, nursing programmes and, ultimately, to the overall health outcomes of many nations.

RAVAGING REGIONAL WARS.

The continuing territorial wars in Europe between Ukraine and Russia; in Africa in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); in the Arab countries; and in the Middle East between Israel and Palestine all have one common feature: the catastrophic effects on nursing services for both nurses and the communities in the affected areas. This is because healthcare services are mostly nursing, and the National Nursing Associations (NNAs) in the affected countries first look up to the International Council of Nurses (ICN) for intervention.

SIGNING OF EXECUTIVE ORDERS BY THE US ON HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS.

Recently, the signing of the Executive Orders by the President of the United States of America, Mr. Donald Trump, firstly withdrawing the US’s membership from the World Health Organization (WHO), and the freezing of the US President’s Emergency Plan for Aid Relief (PEPFAR) has tremendous debilitating effects on nursing and nurses in the main globally as hundreds of NGOs, led by the nurses in running health programmes, face a bleak future.

WHY DO I BRING UP THESE DEVELOPMENTS?

I bring up all these pertinent global developments because the ICN is a global organisation for the nurses. In the context of these developments, the world needs a strong, outward looking ICN from the country level up to the regions and the world over. At the end of the day, the health of the nations is our responsibility.

**MY VISION FOR ICN**

It remains true that nursing is the backbone of the healthcare system globally.

Furthermore, it still holds true that nurses make up the majority of professionals in healthcare settings with well over 50%.

The #NursingNow global campaign’s statement of intent was undisputed, that addressing nursing challenges will automatically solve half the problems of global healthcare.

Equally, the 2020 World’s State of Nursing Report by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Council of Nurses (ICN), which called for an 8 percent increase in the production of nurses by countries annually to avert the catastrophic levels of shortage of nurses globally, underlined the significant role that both nursing and nurses play in achieving positive health outcomes.

The nursing challenges are likely to remain for as long as the concept of healthequity and justiceis not practiced and embraced by the governments of the world.

With the ICN Congress coming up in June 2025, I wish to raise my hand as the Presidential candidate of ICN for the 2025-27 term to lead the ICN’s efforts in fostering health equity andjustice for all citizens of the world.

**MY PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

I wish to commend the ICN for maintaining its current character, which makes it a well-rounded force as it comprises the NNAs from the varied spheres of nursing, namely regulatory, professional and trade union dimensions. This character presents a great strength of moving nursing in unison globally towards health equity and justice for the people of the world.

ICN does incredible work to shift the policy grounds in favour of nursing globally. I will focus on fostering close collaborations and ongoing engagements between NNAs and key stakeholders in health in countries to share the ICN work and open windows to implement its decisions.

Furthermore, a hand-in-glove working relationship and collaboration between the WHO and ICN must be established in regions and countries where they don’t exist and must be strengthened in areas where they exist.

As the core existence of ICN is rooted in its NNAs, and its strength determined by the strength of its NNAs in countries, nurturing NNAs to be well-organised with a solid voice at a country level will be a special project as it will strengthen ICN.

With the world emerging from the coronavirus pandemic, I will focus on better Pandemic Preparedness in the healthcare systems of the NNAs, taking cue from the WHO in their programmes designs. I believe all pandemic preparedness programmes by all healthcare systems must emphasize the safety and well-being of nurses and better health outcomes for communities.

I hail from South Africa, whose commitment to global peace and justice remains in its DNA. I understand that the power to achieve the desired outcomes lies in the ability to organize for a common purpose.

Having assisted in the establishment of many NNAs and regulatory bodies in parts of the African region, thanks to my previous involvement and exposure to how the world order functions, I have enough experience to lead the global organisation.

Yours in nursing.

**THEMBEKA THEODORA GWAGWA.**